



Charlotte Mason's House of Education,
Scale How, Ambleside, UK, 2009

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the Ben Beriah, read aloud, would increase their children's interest in Bible lessons on the same subject.

Aids to First Lessons in Botany (Newmann & Co., 6d. a packet). Five packets with about twenty artistic, illustrative drawings in each packet, dealing with leaves, flowers, roots, &c. They should be very useful in teaching children.

Familiar Wild Flowers, by F. E. Hulme (in 21 parts, 6d. a part, Cassell & Co.) The illustrations, of which there appear to be about a dozen in each part, are well coloured and drawn. The information is popular and interesting.

The Elements of Natural Science, Part II., Physiology and Zoology, by Dr. H. Wettstein (Newmann & Co., 3/-). This manual, translated from the German of Dr. Wettstein, is part of a series of five volumes which the pupils of secondary schools in Zurich are expected to go through in the several years of their school life. The work is intended as a textbook for large classes where the subjects have already been treated of in lectures. One feels a sense of want of proportion in the treatment; for example, "Illnesses" are treated of in two pages; and the Colorado beetle enjoys as much space and illustrations as considerable as does the bear; but the illustrations are very good, and the book should be useful in schools.

Education of Girls and Women in Great Britain, by C. S. Bremner (Swan, Sonnenschein & Co., 4/6). Miss Bremner has accomplished a most difficult task far more successfully than would have seemed possible in a single volume. Her book is divided into two parts—Education in England and Wales and Education in Scotland—and under each part she treats of elementary, secondary, higher and professional education. Her chapter on elementary education is very instructive, and ends with a visit to a Board and to a Voluntary School; and her appreciations show a good deal of fairness and insight. She reviews "High" schools of every kind and degree, and the chief women's colleges, training colleges, examination schemes, etc., are considered in detail. The author's observations are shrewd and just, and she concludes by applying to English education an epigram made originally upon Louis the Fourteenth—

"Il se mettra tard en route
Mais il y arrivera."

OUR WORK.

The Art Club.—June, "Leafy June."—Trees at this time of year are too difficult for any but the most experienced landscape painters to attack. Place them at a respectful distance. Some belt of trees in far or middle distance where the infinite intricacies resolve themselves into one distinct tone, except where the light catches the more prominent masses and shows a touch of green. Note this difference of trees, then for the immediate foreground choose a field of flowers, various or massed, as long as the beauty of the quantity and the perspective of the blossoms as they retire be well observed.

House of Education.—We have received a charming gift for the lecture room. Mrs. Franklin has presented us with Hollyer's reproductions of Watt's "Sir Galahad" and "Aspiration," both subjects which stir our aspirations after that which is best.

Anyone wishing for a Probationer for the summer holidays should apply as soon as possible to the secretary, House of Education.

There will probably be one or two vacancies for three months' students (who do not propose to teach) for the term beginning October 1st.

Mothers' Educational Course.—The examination papers will be sent out on Saturday, June 5th.

PARENTS' REVIEW SCHOOL. EXAMINER'S REPORT, 1897.

There is decided improvement all round; the papers of those who have regularly and systematically taken the work of the School contrasting most markedly with those of the same age who have more recently taken up the work. Greatest advance is shown in Dictation, Composition, and Arithmetic.

Bible Lessons have been almost invariably well done, especially in the narrative portions. Only one or two pupils, however, grasped the full significance of the first question in Class IV.; and in most cases the teaching of Types was imperfectly done.

English Grammar shews great improvement. There are fewer of those glaring errors that showed in previous examinations want of mastery of the subject. Now most are fairly well done. Analysis is perhaps the weakest point.

Literature.—There are several really excellent papers in Class IV., which show a very marked advance on last examination, and the evident interest of the pupils in the subject.

Geography.—The papers are very uneven. A few only are excellent, and many are very weak.

Writing.—There is improvement in all classes, and a greater number of papers in which the work is excellently written and neatly arranged, making the work of examination much easier, and in some cases a pleasure.

Mathematics.—Euclid is still very weak. There are, however, one or two exceptions, and these appear to have mastered the propositions given; but in the majority of cases the work is of little value.

Natural History is almost invariably well done, interest being shown in the subject by the pupils.

Botany.—The papers reach about the average standard, but there are none that attain to the excellence of some of the papers in former examinations.

Physiology and Self-Culture.—This subject is taken by only a few, and these generally have done well.

Historical Subjects.—The questions are very fully answered and generally accurately, but there is a tendency to make general statements take the place of definite historical facts.

Drawing.—Drawing of Buds and Twigs is very good, scarcely any falling below fair, and a large number attaining excellent.

N.B.—Examination papers will be returned on receipt of postage.

PARENTS' REVIEW LITERARY AND TRANSLATION SOCIETIES.

In accordance with the suggestions in the January number of the *Parents' Review*, two Societies have been instituted in connection with it, having for their object the study of English and Foreign Literature. The members of the first society write answers to questions upon some master-piece of English Literature, and the members of the other translate into English some passage from a foreign author. Fresh subjects are proposed every month, and at the end of the year prizes are to be awarded to the most successful, according to the voting of the members on the merits of the papers, which after revision are circulated among them for the purpose.

Since the societies were started the subjects for the one have been, (1) The Essays of Elia; (2) Sir Roger de Coverley; (3) L'Allegro, Il Penseroso, and Lycidas; (4) The Shepherds' Calendar. The subjects for the Translation Society have been (1) Schiller's *Würde der Frauen*; (2) The Easter Festival from "Faust;" and (3) *An die Freude* (Schiller). The papers and translations have been good, but the number of contributors might with advantage be increased.

C. A. ROOPER.

Pen Selwood, Bournemouth.

THE "P.R." LETTER BAG.

[The Editor is not responsible for the opinions of Correspondents.]

DEAR EDITOR,—It may interest some little children who are fond of animals to hear of a kitten who is in the habit of knocking at the front door when she wishes to be admitted. She rests one paw on the panel of the door, while with the other she gives a distinct rat-a-tat-tat with the knocker, which is about three feet from the step. The knock is so like a visitor's that the maids have often opened the door expecting someone, when in walks Miss Trilby (the kitten), with the utmost importance, her tail well up in the air. This happened several times while I was staying at the house, and the people never allow her to knock twice, for fear she should lose faith or the habit be dropped.

Yours very truly, M. S. G.

DEAR EDITOR,—I read with interest the two letters on aquariums in the *Review*. Having kept both salt and fresh water aquariums for several years perhaps my experience may be of some use. Our salt water one is a good sized glass globe, at the bottom of which are some stones and a piece of carbon (such as is used in filters). It is full of sea water, in which floats the sea weed called green laver, or sea lettuce, the best sea-weed for aquariums. This green laver actually increased so much that I had this summer to remove a good deal of it from the globe. The water has not been changed for many months, as the weed keeps it pure. When the

sun shines on the globe the laver rises to the top of the water and exhales numerous silvery globules of oxygen. As the water diminishes by evaporation it is only necessary to fill it up with *fresh* water, as only aqueous vapour evaporates, leaving all the sea salt behind. I always fill up my globe when about half-an-inch has evaporated. It is thus never necessary to change the water or to *manufacture* sea water (as suggested in the *Review*) unless the water actually becomes impure. The inhabitants of my globe are sea anemones, the common, smooth red ones, called *Actinia Mesembryanthemum*, most of these I have had about one-and-a-half years, and some, I believe, even two-and-a-half years. There have been numerous crops of young sea anemones. I feed them with tiny bits of raw meat, which they seize with their waving tentacles. The only other inhabitants are animalculæ and common white sea snails, which live on the sea-weed, and have been in the globe as long as the anemones. There have also been young snails. I had a shrimp for some time, but it died. It would not do to keep little fish with the anemones, as the latter would catch them. I always found that crabs and star-fish died very soon.

Our fresh water aquarium is a wooden box lined with varnished tin, having a fountain in the centre. The bottom is covered with gravel and stones; two flower-pot saucers are supported so as to form shelters for the fish, and on one of them rests a sod of grass, water weeds float in the water. The inhabitants are water snails, eels and sticklebacks. They are fed on small earth worms, and the eels and fish raise up their heads with expectation when they see me. They are also very fond of raw meat, but several of the fish died (a kind of fungus growing on them), and I think the meat must have caused the disease, and have therefore given it up. I change the water sometimes by means of a syphon and re-fill it with the fountain.

When a child I used to keep tadpoles, and watched them through all stages from spawn to perfect frog. They eat the thread-like green weed which is found in ponds in masses. I also kept newts, and have seen them changing their skins, after which they eat the old skin. I also had the carnivorous Great Water Beetle, *Dyticus Marginalis*, and its larva, the terrible water tiger. No other animals can be kept with them. They eat raw meat greedily.

Yours faithfully, M. WILKINS.

Dublin, December 12th, 1896.

DEAR EDITOR,—There is a fascinating article in this month's *Nineteenth Century* on "The Speech of Children," by S. S. Buchman, in which the writer uses the earliest intelligent sounds made by infants, such as *ma*, *pa*, *da*, *ta*, *lal*, &c., to illustrate the origin of language in primitive nations, and traces these roots in words of cognate meaning in Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, Irish, and many other languages. By the careful study of the early speech of several actual children, varying in age from 20 months to five years, he has thrown much light on a most interesting subject.

The third of Dr. J. M. Rice's series of papers on Education (*Forum*, February) deals with the question of "Economy of Time in Education." This is to be sought (1) by making the lessons interesting to the children,